

**Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services**

**Department of Social Services
Central Regional Office
1604 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, VA 23229**

December 14, 2022

Attending: William Boone (Chair), John Kines (Vice Chair), Megan Miloser (Secretary), Sheryl Garland, Maria Benjamin, Jennifer Slack, Leslie Ford, Don Carey, DeRonda Short, Zulma Santos.

Absent: Rachna Heizer.

Also in Attendance: Dr. Danny Avula (Commissioner) and Ms. Ellen Malenke (Assistant Attorney General).

Meeting called to order at 10:01am – Buckey Boone

Regulatory Review for Board Members – Karin Clark provided an overview of the regulatory process.

Comments from the Commissioner – Dr. Avula provided local, state, and federal updates.

Permanency Part II-Options for Kinship Caregivers – Em Parente and Morgan Nelson provided an overview of the Permanency Part II-Options for Kinship Caregivers. Handouts were provided.

COMMENT PERIOD

Comment from the Public – Judy Hackler, Virginia Assisted Living Association (VALA)

Ms. Hackler expressed concerns about assisted living facilities, child placement agencies, and the regulations. She expressed she is looking forward to reducing some of the regulations and working out some of the technicalities. She shared that a task force is being created for temporary prevention orders. She encouraged the Board to write a letter to the General Assembly to increase the funding for the Auxiliary Grant.

There were no comments from boards and directors of community action agencies.

Comments from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives – Rebecca Morgan, President
Ms. Morgan asked that, if the Board prepares a letter to request additional funding for assisted living, to indicate the funds are state funded and not locally funded. She wants to transition from reactive to proactive processes. With her role and her partnership with the state, she wants to be able to share what is going on. She would like to focus on how to fix the issues.

Linda Gibson, Chair Professional Development Committee

Ms. Gibson shared her concerns regarding workforce and recruitment and retention. Her focus is on-boarding staff and generating interest in their industry. Having enough staff to do the work and having

properly trained staff are challenges. The Committee puts out a roadmap every year which highlights the top priorities. The first is need for effective training programs for the entire system. The second is the need for the expansion of the stipend program.

Comment from the VA Community Action Partnership – Erik Johnston, President

Mr. Johnston indicated the VACAP November 2022 summit was a success. VACAP's two legislative priorities for 2023 include increasing funding for the Virginia CAHS Campaign/Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and build support for inclusion of the Whole Family approach for all community action agencies.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approved October 2022 Meeting Minutes
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Garland), second (Mr. Carey), motion approved with Don Carey abstaining.

2. Benefit Programs Specialist Appreciation Month Resolution
On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Kines), second (Ms. Miloser), motion approved with all in favor.

3. 22VAC40-890, Human Subject Research Regulations- Fast Track Regulation
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Ford), second (Mr. Carey), motion approved with all in favor.

4. 22VAC40-73, Standards for Licensed Assisted Living Facilities- NOIRA
On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Kines), second (Ms. Slack), motion approved with all in favor.

5. 22VAC40-73, Standards for Licensed Assisted Living Facilities- Fast Track Regulation
On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Carey), second (Mr. Kines), motion approved with one oppose (Ms. Slack).

6. Adopt State Board of Social Service Bylaws
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Ford), second (Mr. Carey), motion approved with all in favor.

7. Adopt State Board of Social Services 2023 Meeting Schedule
On Motion Duly Made, (Ms. Slack), second (Mr. Kines), motion approved with all in favor.
NOTE: Board members agreed to future agendas beginning at 10:00 AM with public comment, followed by action items. Information and other Board business will follow.

Board Member Requests for Future Information

Ms. Short, during the presentation on permanency, requested information on the financial package that a foster parent v. a kinship provider receives, by area of state. Mr. Ayers will provide this information. Ms. Short, following the adoption of the amended bylaws, inquired about whether minutes are taken during closed meeting and if so, how such minutes are required to be stored. Ms. Malenke agreed to speak to the matter at the February 2023 meeting.

Ms. Ford requested financial information on Medicaid unwinding. This information will be obtained from DMAS.

Ms. Slack was recently contacted by a citizen concerned about the safety of the staff at the Roanoke Office. Commissioner Avula advised her to connect with Bethany Imbody, Director of Local Engagement & Support.

In addition, Ms. Slack asked about funding to address VaCMS. Commissioner Avula indicated that if the funding request is included in the Governor's introduced budget, the agency would advocate and educate legislators. If it is not, the League would continue in their advocacy role. The Board can determine if/how they want to advocate.

Ms. Garland requested future discussion about the training academy model and the stipend program. She noted it would be helpful to know if one or both were included in the Governor's introduced budget. If not, she would like to discuss options for DSS to explore workforce & retention and what the Board can do to advocate. Commissioner Avula responded that Board members would receive a condensed version of the DSS portion of the budget and can determine if time should be carved out for discussion.

Mr. Boone is concerned about therapeutic day treatment programs ceasing operation in schools in his region, due to insufficient Medicaid reimbursement rates. Mr. Ayers noted that it is a DMAS issue. Mr. Boone requested to see how the Department can advocate for a policy to get more assistance to these children or give the Board suggestions for advocating at the next meeting. Mr. Ayers will follow up.

Ms. Santos noted the severity of mental health issues and crime in communities and stressed the need to get money in the budget to increase mental health treatment.

Meeting adjourned at 1:23pm.